PARTY GAMES for 50 YEAR OLDS

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PARTY GAMES FOR 50 YEAR OLDS

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INTRODUCTION

If you're going to a party for 50-year-olds, you should be old enough to have learned that reading introductions is a total waste of time. This is the place where authors thank their mothers and tell you how clever they were in compiling their book, but it's unlikely you'll find any words of wisdom. My thoughts are that since you've already spent your money on this book, you might as well turn the page and start selecting some games. If the party turns out to be a sizzler, try to invite me next time and I'll teach you the really good games.

ICE BREAKERS

Ice breakers are quick and easy games that begin as soon as the last guest arrives. These are fun games to help people mingle and become familiar with each other before the really wild games start!

Penny Passer

Every 50-year-old has a penny jar somewhere. This game is a great way to redistribute those pennies into your friends' pockets and behind the seat cushions of all your furniture.

As guests walk in the door, hand each one a bag containing ten pennies. The object of the game is for guests to empty their bags as quickly as possible. To do so, players must introduce themselves and shake hands with everyone in the room, giving a penny to every eighth person whose hand they shake. Naturally, players will be shaking hands with the same guests over and over—just in different sequence. As soon as a player discards a penny, he may acquire one since he, in turn, will be another guest's "eighth handshake." This game can get very silly very quickly because participants will be extending their hands fast and furiously trying to empty their bags!

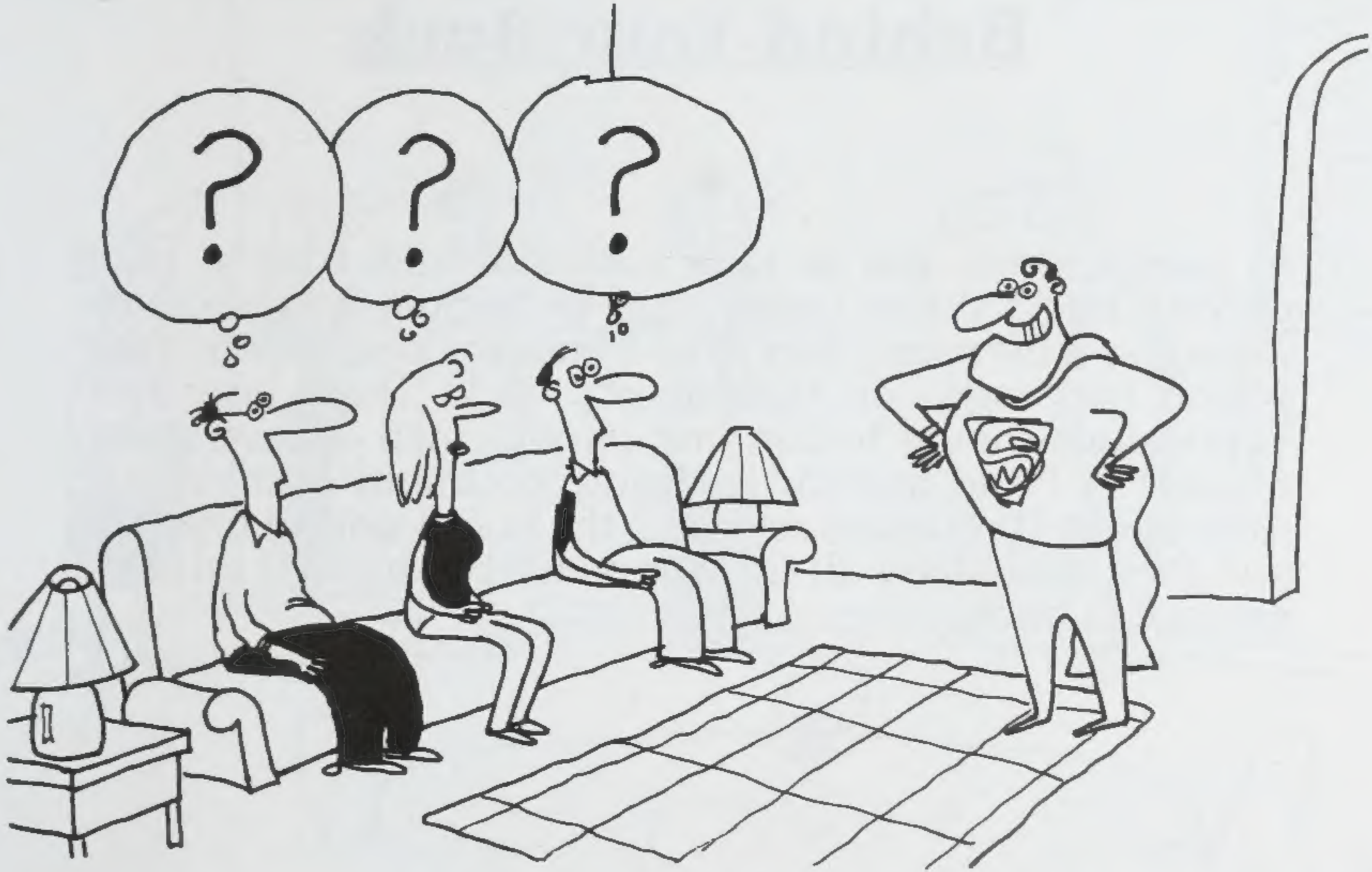
The winner, of course, is the first person to discard all his pennies. This game can also be played so that the object of the game is to acquire pennies and the winner is the one with the most pennies in the end. That seems to make more sense to me, especially if you play it with quarters. Regardless, the smart guests will be those who ignore this game completely and go directly to the hors d'oeuvres, making them the true winners.

Security Clearance

As guests meet and greet each other at the beginning of the party, they try to get as much self-descriptive information from each other as possible and write it down on paper you provide. (You, of course, know your guests better than anyone else and you have your own list of vital stats on each one).

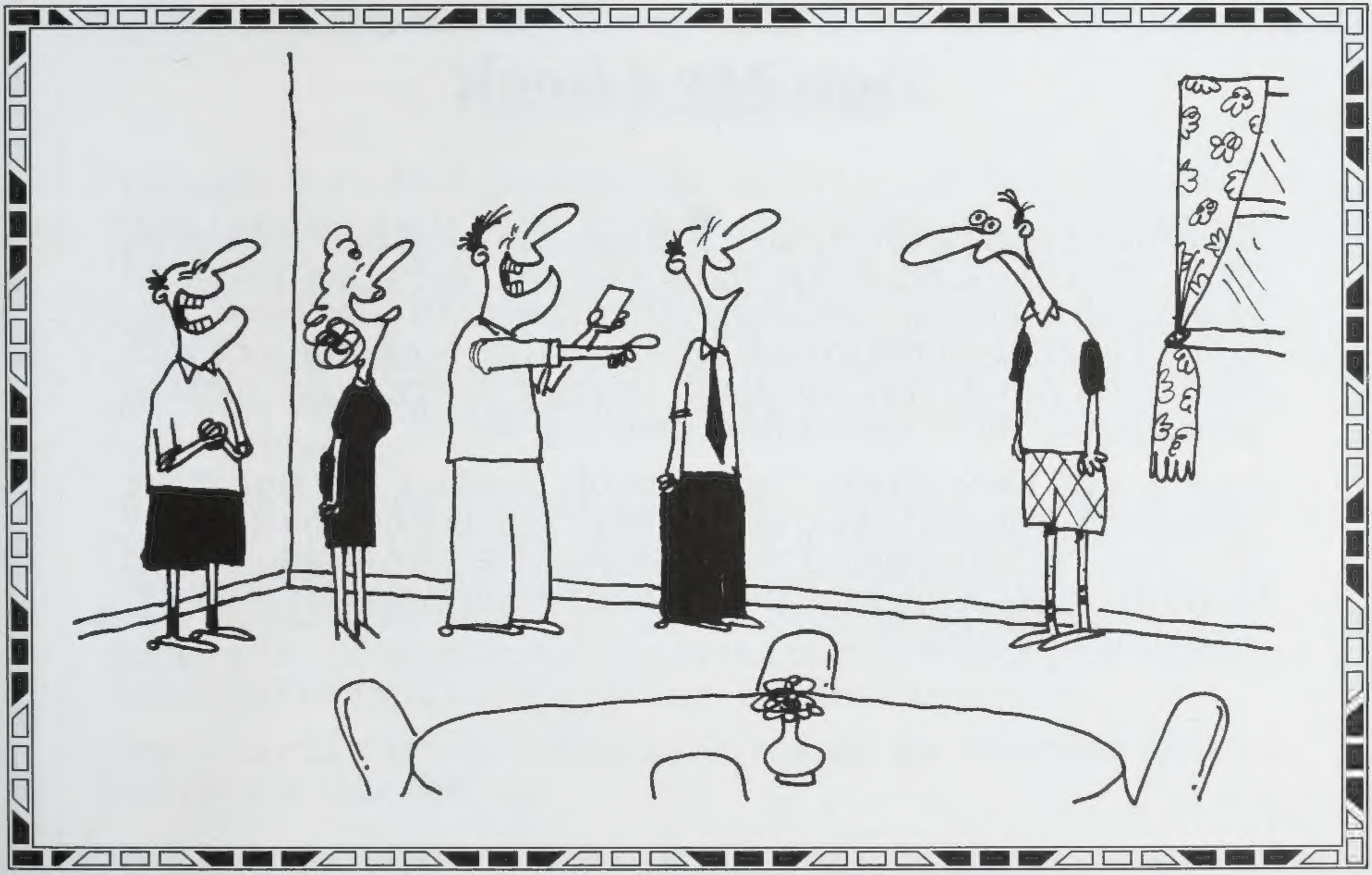
Play really begins at the end of the party when you reveal your personal list of facts describing a certain guest. When a player recognizes the identity of the mysterious guest, he shouts it out and wins a prize.

This is a great game to wind down the evening because the winner of the first round must also be the first to leave the party. Play continues until the house is empty or only the cleanup crew remains.



Behind Your Back

As guests arrive, pin or tape a blank index card to each player's back. When guests start to mingle and circulate throughout the room, they write a one-line description of the person they meet on that guest's back. These brief first impressions should be fun and playful such as "computer wizard" or "stud muffin," nothing too literal or insulting. After about 10 minutes or so, all the guests gather together and they read aloud all the comments on the card on their neighbor's back.



Sign My Check

Every guest puts a brown paper bag over the hand they write with. Then, they go around the room and ask the other guests to autograph their bag. Of course, the others will also have their writing hands covered so they must sign their John Hancock with the wrong hand. This can result in some pretty rough looking penmanship that's sometimes barely legible.

Guests will undoubtedly have trouble reading the signatures which will prompt them to ask the other guests what the hell they just wrote, thereby getting people engaged in conversations. And that's the point of this exercise. The first person to get all the guests' signatures wins a prize.

Truth Serum

This game provides a great way for guests to learn more about each other. Players stand in a circle, each one holding 10 or 15 toothpicks. The object of the game is to acquire as many toothpicks as possible. A player starts by truthfully completing the sentence, "I'm deprived. I've never _____." For example, "I've never had a pony; slept with a blonde; travelled to Italy," etc. Then everyone in the circle who HAS done what that player has NEVER done, must give him one of their toothpicks.

Of course, there will be some players who choose to travel the risqué route and fill in the blank with some kind of perverse depravation. It gives everyone a chance to see just what their friends have been up to (or at least what they claim to have been up to). The winner is the player with the most toothpicks in the end, and now that he has a handful of toothpicks, he won't feel deprived anymore!

Keep a careful watch for cheats who try to slip the toothpicks from the canapés into their pile.

Name Bingo

This is a great game for parties made up of strangers or for people who tend to forget everyone's name. Before the party, prepare BINGO game sheets with 16-25 large blank spaces. As guests arrive, hand each one a BINGO sheet and have them write their name on a slip of paper and drop it in a bowl. Each guest must go around the room, introduce themselves and have other guests write their signatures in the blank spaces on their game sheet. After everyone has filled up the spaces on their sheet and they get comfortable, with a drink in one hand and a cocktail weenie in the other, pull the guests' names out of the bowl. As each name is called, players check off the signature of that guest on their sheet. The first player to have a line of called out signatures on her board, wins.

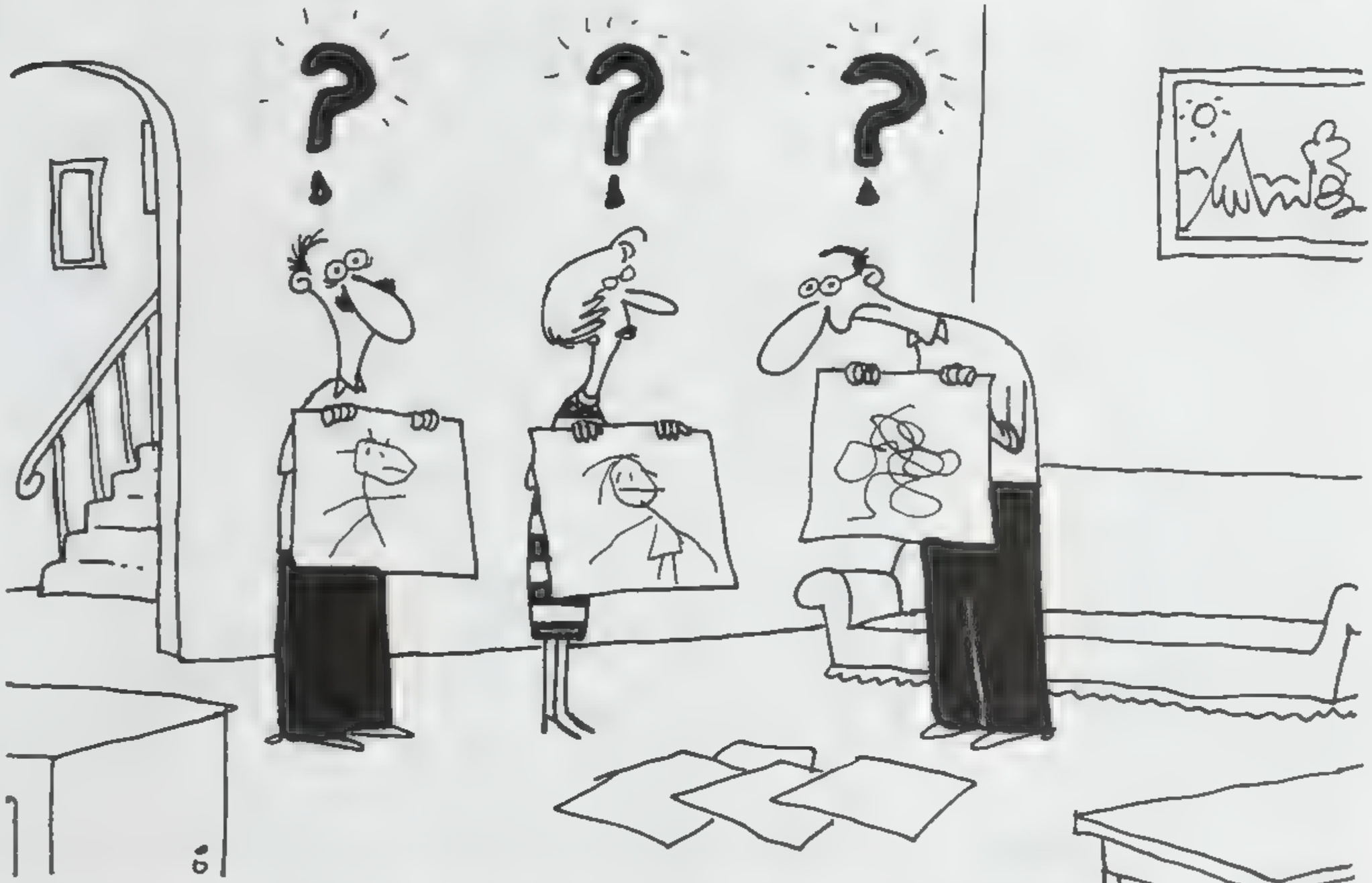
FOR THE LAST TIME, MY NAME'S NOT HANK!

Picture This

This game is a cute, mindless exercise for guests to get to know each other better. Come to think of it, most of our games are pretty mindless. But, hey, you bought the book.

All you have to do is provide each guest with an unlined piece of paper and pencil, then explain that everyone is to draw a self-portrait—with the lights OFF. After everyone has mutilated their image of themselves on the paper, turn the lights back on and collect the drawings. As you hold each one up for all the group to see, guests try to match up the portraits to the names and faces at the party.

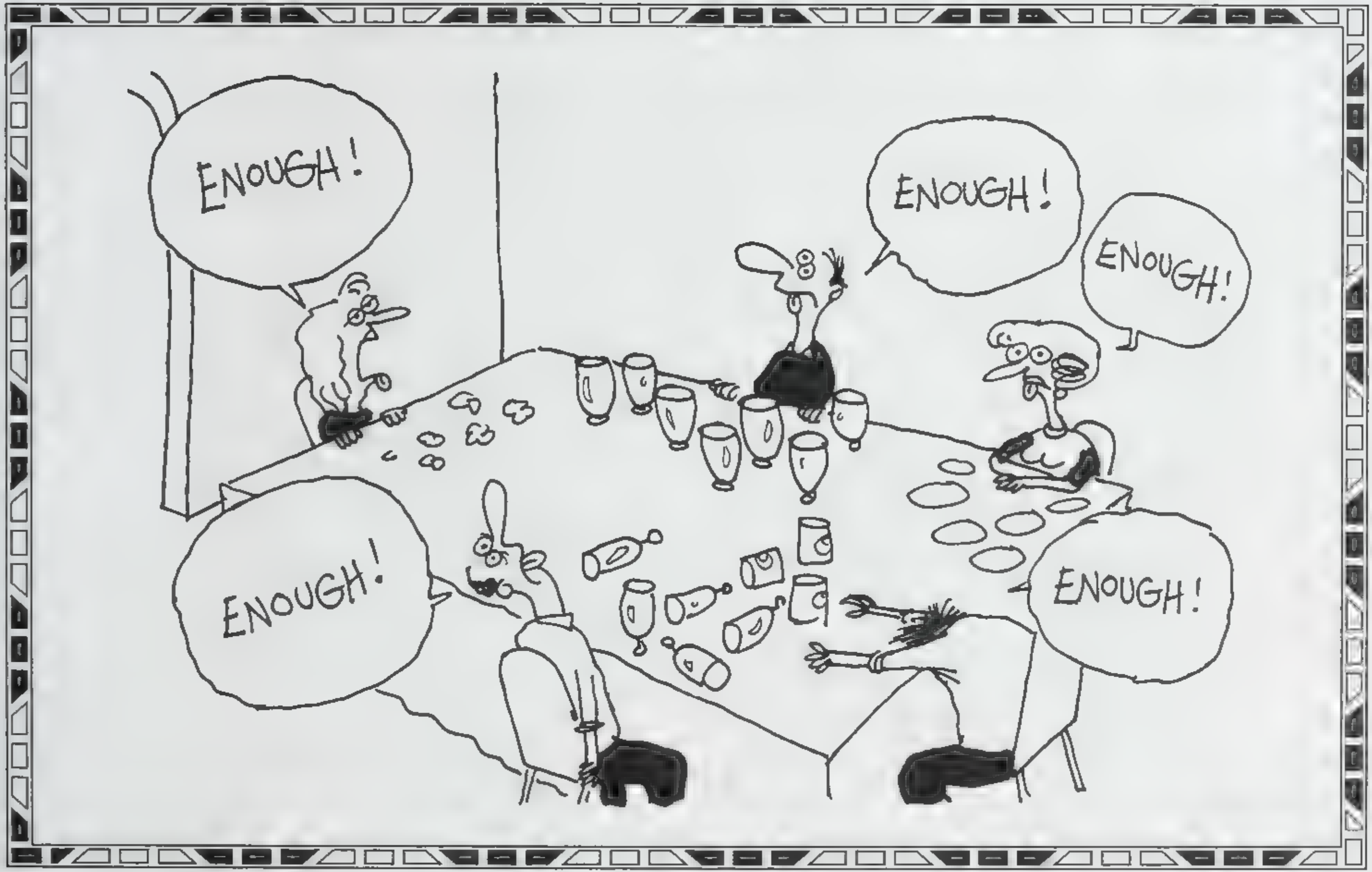
A word of caution—don't let guests lean on your coffee tables to draw in the dark—some will invariably miss the paper and you'll end up with scribbles all over your furniture.



Overload

Two things I can never get enough of are Godiva chocolates and romantic movies. In fact a perfect evening for me would be spent eating Godiva chocolates while watching a triple treat of *When Harry Met Sally*, *Four Weddings and A Funeral* and *An Affair To Remember*. But I'm sure the guests at your party will have insatiable appetites for much more exciting things than that.

To play, every guest writes down six things they can't get enough of which they've had in the past. No names are written on the lists. When everyone has finished writing, collect the lists in a big bowl and read them to the crowd. Guests try to figure out which list belongs to each player.


ENOUGH!
ENOUGH!
ENOUGH!
ENOUGH!
ENOUGH!
ENOUGH!

Word Search

Before the party, write individual letters on sheets of paper and place them in separate envelopes. Hand each guest an envelope and have them pair up with other players to make a word. Four letter words are allowed—in fact they're encouraged. The group to create the most inventive (or most crude) word wins. (All words must be real...you can't make up words like you do in *Scrabble*.)

"IT'S THE BEST PARTY
I'VE EVER BEEN TO."

Famous People

This one is an old favorite. Before the party, write the names of celebrities on separate pieces of paper. As guests arrive, tape one of these "name tags" to each person's back. Guests have no idea who they are supposed to be, but they can see the names taped to the other players' backs. All participants must speak to each other as if they were addressing the real celebrities.

The object of the game is for guests to figure out who they are by the tone in which they are addressed and by asking indirect questions about their identity. The game continues until every guest has guessed their celebrity status. Of course, if everyone at your party IS a celebrity, you can use name tags of street people and indigenous bums like Typhus Annie or Colombian Carlos.

"ARE THE PARTY GAMES WEARING YOU OUT, DEAR?"

Résumé

Here's another great mingling game to help guests learn each other's names quickly. Before the party, prepare a list of hints describing everyone on your guest list. Each guest receives a copy of the list as they arrive. Possible examples for hints on the list include:

1) Has a basketball autographed by retired Celtic great.
   Guest's name_____ Celtic great_____
2) Has lived in a foreign country on business.
   Guest's name _____ Country _____
3) Has a very bizarre house pet.
   Guest's name_____ Pet_____
4) Once ran for local political office.
   Guest's name_____ Office_____

As guests circulate, they ask each other about their lives so they can fill in the blanks. After a few minutes, call the guests together and select the player with the most names filled in. That player then introduces the people on her list to the rest of the crowd.

"HAD A SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENT GO TERRIBLY WRONG."

Games Even Party Poopers Will Play

Some people have a reputation for pooping out at parties and resisting game playing, but what are you going to do, NOT invite them? We doubt it—especially if they're your boss or the only people on your block with a swimming pool. So, to get these social deviants involved with the rest of the crowd you should try these simple, fun games.

Memory Lapse

Before the party, set out lots of crazy, weird objects in the front hallway so guests will notice them on their way into the festivities. Later, hand out pens and paper and ask guests to write down whatever objects they can recall seeing in the hallway. The player with the longest list of correctly recalled items, wins. Guests who can't remember anything are removed from the list of designated drivers. (Anyone over 55 is excused from participating since they probably can't even remember whose party it is.)

MAN, I HATE BEING THE DESIGNATED DRIVER!

TP Mystery

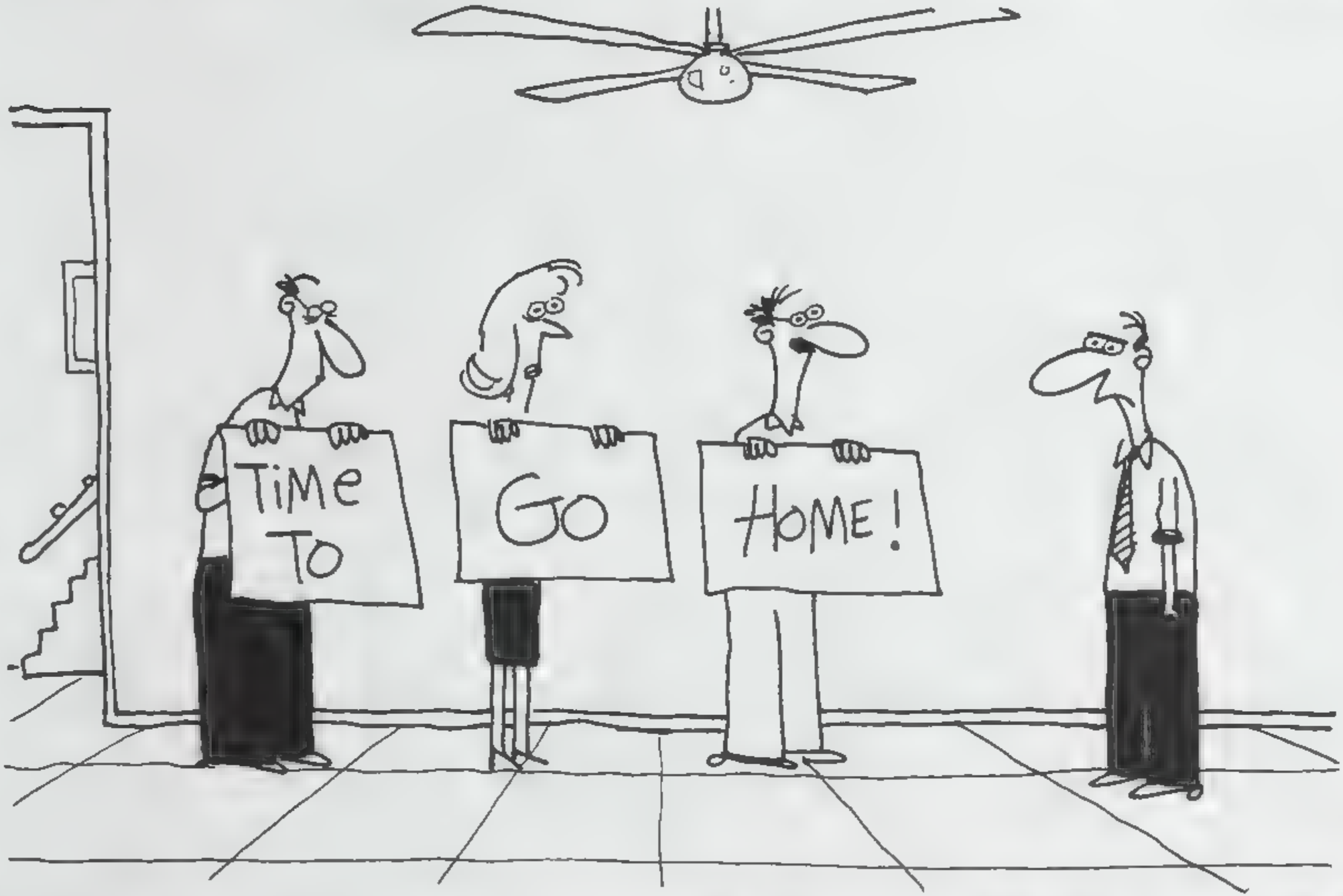
This is an easy game that even reluctant game players will enjoy. As guests arrive, hold out a roll of toilet paper and ask each guest to tear off whatever length of toilet paper they think they will need. You don't have to explain what they might need it for, unless it's that kind of party. You might want to say, "We're a little short of toilet paper tonight, and we want to make sure we don't run out."

At some point during the party, gather all the guests together and measure the guest of honor's bust line or waist line (or whatever part the crowd decides to measure). The guest who has the strip of toilet paper closest to that length wins a prize.

Mega Message

This game can be played at any time during the festivities and is a great pastime for the wallflowers. It gives them something to do while they lean on the walls.

Before the party, write a bunch of words related to the theme of the party on separate slips of paper and post them in a central location. As the party progresses, guests try to make as long a sentence as possible from these words. The guest with the longest, most coherent sentence wins a prize.


TIME TO
GO
HOME!

Epicurean Delights

If you can't deal with serving dainty finger sandwiches or escargot at your party, play this game and you can skip the hors d'oeuvres all together.

Remove the labels from 10 or 15 jars of baby food and put a piece of tape with a code on each jar so you alone can identify the contents. Put the jars on a tray with a supply of those little plastic tasting spoons you get at ice cream shoppes. (No, I don't know where to buy them.)

Each player dips a clean spoon in a jar and tastes the contents trying to guess what it is. Players with the most correct answers do NOT have to finish the leftover strained carrots or spinach and liver mix.

FRANK Never COULD
PLAY THIS GAME!

Pocket Bingo

Everyone has pockets and purses bulging with things they don't really need, and this is a great game to clean them out. Before the party, make up BINGO game cards with 9 or 16 oversized blank squares, then give one to each guest as they arrive. Guests empty their pockets and purses and put objects on the squares such as lipstick, a money clip, spare change, postage stamps, etc. (It's a good idea to have a box full of small objects that could be found in a pocket or purse to help out those who travel light).

Players go around in turn yelling out an object on their game board and remove it. Other players with the same objects on their boards remove them as well. Play continues until someone has an empty row or board and yells out "BINGO!"

The Nose Knows

Most people haven't the slightest idea what kind of alcohol they drink. Oh, maybe they can tell the difference between gin and scotch, but not between Johnny Walker Red and Black. To play this game, you simply line up shot glasses full of 10 or 15 different kinds of liquor to see just how many can be identified by your party guests. If nothing else, it will let you know when to switch to the cheap booze.

There is only one simple rule: no tasting is allowed. Players must rely on sense of smell only. (If guests are really having a hard time naming the liquor, you could modify the rule and let everyone put a drop on the tip of their tongue). The one who can identify the most shots correctly is the winner, whose reward should be to finish his or her favorite. If few people can identify anything, as I suspect, it will give you an idea of how much money you can save on liquor at your next party.

SOMEONE STOP THE ROOM FROM SPINNING!

CONTESTS

Contests are quick, fun games that need no real organization and can be played at any time during a party. They're a great remedy for a lull in the conversation or when guests just want to relax after engaging in active, physical games.

Guesstimate

Before guests arrive, fill a glass jar or clear container with a predetermined number of jellybeans, candy corn, peanuts, M&M's or some other desirable foodstuff.

Guests simply fill out slips of paper with their "guesstimate" of the total number of objects in the jar. The player who guesses closest to the actual amount is the winner and gets to take home the jar full of goodies or distribute select quantities to their friends.

"OK, WHO ATE ALL THE JELLYBEANS?"

Bubble Trouble

Let's face it, we're all kids at heart who would love an excuse to chew giant wads of bubble gum and blow obnoxiously large bubbles.

Every player gets the same amount of gum which they chew until the wad reaches the optimum level of bubble blowing softness and pliability. Then, they simply blow their brains out! The Judge determines who has blown the biggest bubble by inventively utilizing a straight ruler.

Naturally, the person who blows the biggest bubble wins a prize and gets to use the mirror first to pick the gum off their face and hair.

Tip The Scale

During pre-party preparation, set out several odds and ends on a table in the corner. At an appropriate time, have the guests gather around the table to study the objects and guess the weights of each one. Guests write their guesses on index cards for you to gather. Once all the cards are collected, reveal the true weights of each item and the guest with the highest number of accurate guesses wins a small prize. If you are burdened by a mean streak, you might include some photos of your guests, or require the weights in grams.

"AGNES, I THINK WE'LL NEED A BIGGER SCALE!"

Birth Date Bungle

As guests arrive, hand each one an index card and instruct everyone to write their birth date (but not their name) on the card. After you collect all the cards, tack them to a centrally located board. At a point during the party when guests know each other by name, ask players to match up the birth dates with each guest. The player to guess the most correct birth dates wins a little prize. With parties of more than 25 people, you'll be amazed at how often duplicate birthdays appear, should you be interested in trivia like that.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION
I'M ONLY 35!

How Old Are You?

Before the party, clip out pictures of celebrities from magazines or newspapers and hang them on a board for all the guests to see.

Guests guess the ages of the celebrities and write them down on a piece of paper. (To keep things lively, you should add pictures of some of the guests). The one to guess the most ages accurately, wins.

WHAT'S THE "E" FOR?
E

COUPLES GAMES

Although couples probably get enough play time together when they're home alone, they also get great satisfaction from beating out other couples in group games. Here are some fun games to play when you have a guest list full of couples.

Motor Mouth

This game lets couples revel in one of their favorite pastimes—ignoring everything their better half says. Instruct couples to stand back to back. At your signal, have them turn to face each other and start talking non-stop for 60 seconds about absolutely anything at all. Players have to talk at the same time and what they say does NOT have to make sense. The first person in each pair to pause is out. After one round, have guests switch partners and play again.

I don't Stand a Chance!

Significant Other

Divide your coupled guests and direct the men to go off into a separate room (that should be easy to accomplish—just point them toward the room with the bar). Give the men a questionnaire to fill out with questions such as, "What's your favorite color? Biggest pet peeve? Most annoying habit? Favorite flavor of ice cream? Favorite movie? First thing you do in morning?" etc.

When they finish filling in the blanks, collect their questionnaires and have them come back into the room to sit with their respective partners. Then ask each woman the same questions out loud. She answers with the responses she expects her partner to give, and the couple with the highest number of matching answers wins the game.

"I WAS ONLY KIDDING, Dear,
YOU DON'T SNORE!"

Touch and Tell

At a convenient moment during the party, separate the women and men into two different rooms. If this is too difficult a task and the men and women want to stick together, your party is probably going pretty well and you don't need to play any stupid games. But, if you can pry the guests apart, send them to different rooms and give every player a paper bag to put over their heads. Dim the lights, and when the two groups are brought back into the same room, players must "feel around" to find their respective partner—no talking is allowed.

There are no real winners in this game but the "losers" are the last two people who find each other. Please note: You have the option to provide bags with or without eye holes. The game becomes one big grope fest if no eye holes are provided—which could be a good thing if the right crowd comes to your party. For "Over 50" parties, you may be able to dispense with the paper bags and simply ask everyone to remove their bifocals.

wack!
FRESH!

Over Dressed

This one is great for all you closet cross dressers. Before the party, gather lots of oversized clothing for men and women including everything from hats to shoes to underwear. All clothing is evenly divided so there are as many male articles of clothing as there are female, then the clothes are mixed up and thrown into an open suitcase. About ten feet from the suitcase is the finish line.

You are in charge of timing the couples with a stop watch. When you say "Go," the first couple runs to the pile to get dressed as fast as possible. The man puts on the women's clothing and the woman puts on the men's clothing—over their own clothes, of course (unless it's that kind of party).

After the players are successfully dressed, they close the suitcase, pick it up and rush hand in hand to the finish line. After all the couples have had a turn, the different times are compared and the couple with the shortest time wins.

10

PHYSICAL GAMES

This set of games is for parties full of guests who like to get down and dirty. A lot of huffing, puffing, sweating and touching is involved in these raucous activities, so if you want to play these games at your party, be sure to leave the wallflowers off your guest list.

Body Contact

If you liked Spin the Bottle as a kid, you're going to love this game. It's a fun, adult variation of Musical Chairs. Players pair up and form two circles, one inside the other, and stand facing each other. Someone is selected as the Leader and another player is in charge of starting and stopping the music. As soon as the music starts, the two circles move in opposite directions. The Leader stands in the middle of the two circles and issues commands such as "head to head," "cheek to cheek," "elbow to knee," etc.

When the music stops, players opposite each other must pair up their designated body part to that of their partner. (By the way, this game can be as tame or as torrid as participants will allow...) The Leader finds a player to pair up with when the music stops and the "odd person out" becomes the next Leader. There may be no winner, but then again there is no loser either.

Those aren't the cheeks
I was referring
to!

The Buck Stops Here

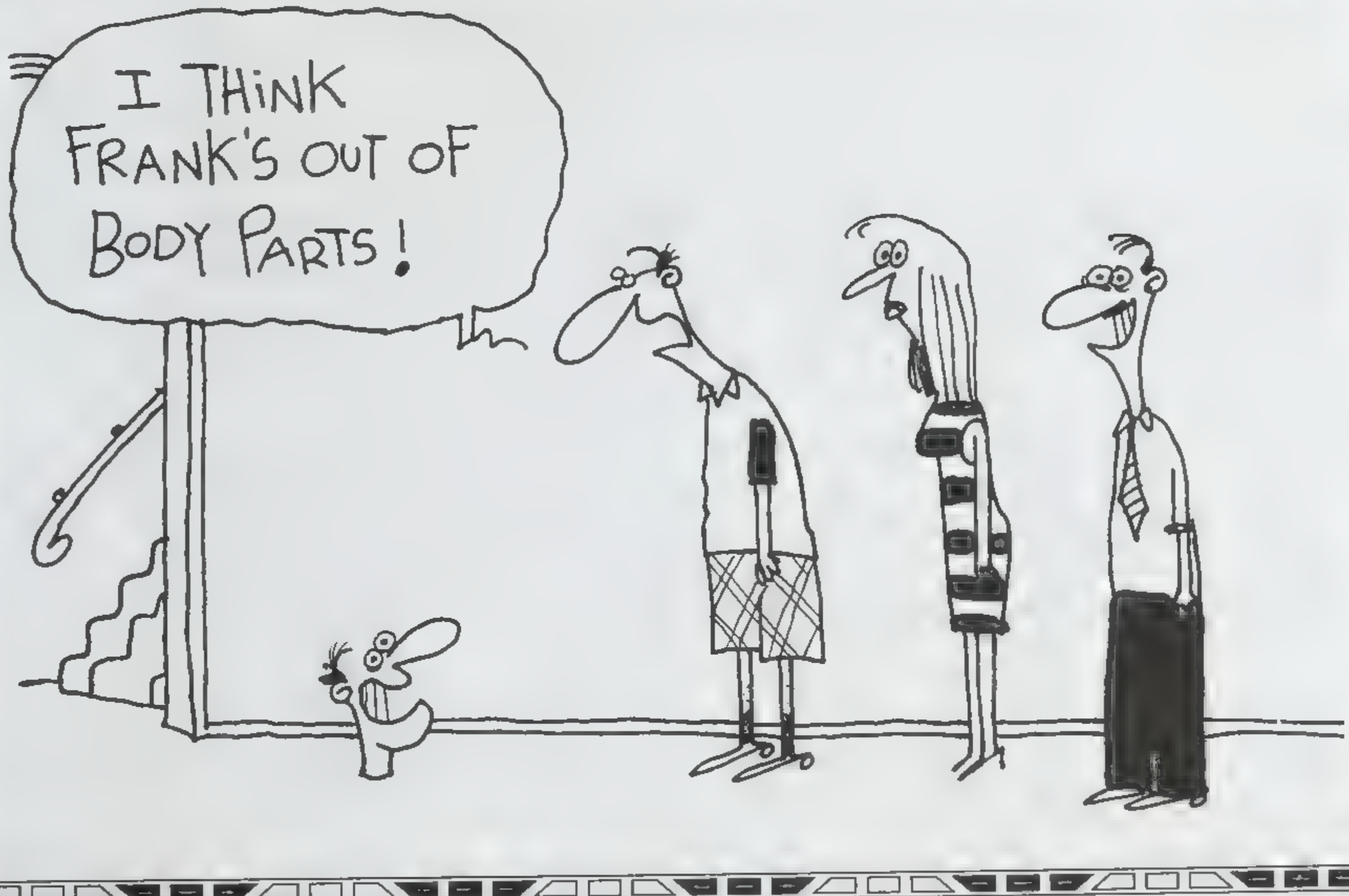
Remember the old game where players passed oranges held under their chins or passed lifesavers on toothpicks held between their teeth? Well, this one is more fun. Guests line up man-woman-man-woman in as many rows as possible with at least six people per row.

The object of the game is to pass a dollar bill from person to person in the row as quickly as possible. The catch is that the dollar bill is held between each player's knees. Players are apt to crack up while trying to contort into the best position possible for passing the bills. The first team to pass the dollar from the beginning to the end of the line wins. Their prize is keeping all the dollars.

I KNOW HE'S NOT PLAYING BY THE RULES, BOB! JUST GIVE HIM THE DOLLAR!

Head to Toe

Players form a circle and the designated Leader stands in the middle. The Leader points to a body part, her elbow for example, and says, "This is my foot." Then she points to someone in the circle. The player she singles out must think fast and flip-flop the message, saying back to her, "This is my elbow" as he points to his foot. The chosen player only has five seconds to respond and if he gets too confused and answers incorrectly, he becomes the next Leader. Playing this game as quickly as possible gets the best results and the most laughs. Play continues until people run out of body parts to name.


I THINK FRANK'S OUT OF BODY PARTS!

Pass The Hat

This is a variation of the old stand by, Musical Chairs. It's a lot of fun to play if your guests don't mind leaving your party looking like they've had a really bad hair day. All you have to do is provide a bunch of funky hats ranging from Easter Bonnets to knit ski hats to baseball caps. A toupee or wig adds to the fun, too.

Someone is in charge of starting and stopping the music and all the other guests stand in a circle. Every guest but one wears a hat. When the music starts, players grab the hat off their neighbor's head and put it on their own and continue until the music stops. The person left without a hat is out.

Sardine

This is a great game to get your party guests bonding together—in one great big, sweaty heap. Before the party, cut some blank paper into as many strips as there are guests. Write the letter "S" on one slip and leave the rest blank, then put all the slips in a bowl. The player to pick the "S" is the Sardine. All the players start out in the same room and the lights throughout the whole house are turned off. The Sardine finds a suitable hiding place and stays there motionless.

As the other players encounter each other in the dark, they ask each other, "Are you the Sardine?" If the answer is "No," they keep searching. If the answer is "Yes," that player joins the Sardine in the secret hiding place, snuggling as close to him as possible. As more and more players find the Sardine and join him, the more cramped the hiding place becomes and inevitably, the guests start giggling.

After a set time limit, the few pathetic shmucks who have apparently lost most of their faculties, including their hearing and sense of direction, must carry out a harmless penalty agreed upon by the rest of the players.

"I KNOW, LET'S PLAY SARDINE."

String Along

Before the party, hide 40-60 different lengths of colorful yarn around the house. After guests arrive and they are divided into teams, instruct them to search for the yarn. You could color coordinate each group and have teams look for certain colors, or just let the teams collect any color yarn they happen upon for about 15 minutes.

After guests frantically turn over couch cushions and dig through your potted plants and linen closet to uncover the yarn, have each team tie together all the yarn they have gathered. The team with the longest string wins.

Athlete's Foot

This game is silly but it gets everyone in a light, fun mood almost instantly. Divide the guests into two groups and ask all the members of one group to put on mismatched pairs of gloves, the bigger and more awkward the gloves the better—they can range from ski gloves to oven mitts to boxing gloves, if you've got them.

The first group sits in a circle facing inward wearing their crazy gloves. In the center of the circle is a huge pile of all kinds of socks from sheer knee highs to heavy woolen socks to tiny peds with pom poms on the heels.

Just before play begins, the spectator group ties blindfolds on every player! The object of the game is for players to put on as many socks as possible while wearing the gloves and blindfolds. The group of guests spectating for the first round will have as much fun as the participants just by watching them go at it.

Whistle Cracker

This is a fun one for people who enjoy talking with their mouths full and don't mind making a mess. The players are divided into two teams and line up facing each other.

When you say "Go," the first person in each line shovels three salty crackers into his mouth. When he's finished eating them, he whistles the first line of a popular song. When that player is done whistling, the next player in line eats three crackers and whistles the second line of the song. Play continues down the line until everyone has had a turn. The first team to finish wins.

RISQUÉ GAMES

WARNING: Due to the adult nature of these games, they may cause unreasonable amounts of laughter and embarrassment and are therefore not suitable for every party.

Risqué Charades

Rules

First, assemble a group of fun loving, open-minded friends. This is the only hard part. Most people already know how to play Charades so you really don't have to bother reading these instructions—just plunge right in.

In case you've been a hermit all your life or you're a newcomer to this country (do they play Charades in Cuba?), here is the general idea: the group is divided into two teams. One team picks a phrase (perhaps from the risqué list provided below) and whispers it or writes it out for one opposing team member. That person becomes the "Actor" and may not show or tell the phrase to his or her teammates, but must act out the words using pantomime. The teammates try to guess the phrase within a given time limit.

Man Hiding In Ladies' Room
Teenage Boy Unhooking Bra
Peeping Tom In Girls' School
Guys At A Bachelor Party
Obscene Phone Call
Sex On A Sandy Beach
Sex In The Backseat
D-Cup In a B-Cup Bra
Crotchless Panties
A Wet Dream
Skinny Dipping
How Was I?
A Tease
Belly Dancer
Talk Dirty To Me
Tear Away Panties
Whipped Cream
Impatient Newlyweds
Edible Underwear
Doggie Position
Wet Kiss
Sex Maniac
Horny Frankenstein
Playing Doctor

That's all there is to it and you're allowed to make up your own rules—I'm not your mother, after all. Both teams can play at the same time which leads to a very exciting game but one in which the players miss the fun of watching the other actors struggle with their phrase. Just do what's the most fun for you. This is a party after all, not a final exam. If some actors get too rowdy, just remember to take them off your guest list for the next party.

If you've never played before, these tips may help:

1. To indicate the length of the phrase, the actor holds up as many fingers as there are words.
2. To indicate the number of syllables in a word, the actor holds out his arm and places as many fingers as there are syllables on his forearm.
3. To indicate that a little word or conjunction like a, an, and, but, it, to, if, or the, is in the phrase, the actor makes a sign for "tiny" by holding up her thumb and forefinger with only a small space between them. All the teammates yell out little words until someone guesses the right one.
4. To indicate "sounds like" the actor cups her hand behind her ear.

Winning The Game

A team wins by guessing the phrase in the shortest time or by getting the best overall time for several rounds of play. You decide who wins. After all, you are all adults—otherwise, you shouldn't be playing this game.

Tight Knit Group

Guests must line up in two rows in man-woman-man-woman order. The first person in each line is given a spoon with about four yards of string or yarn attached. At your command, she must drop the spoon DOWN her shirt and feed it out through her skirt or pant leg. If necessary, the player in line behind her can lend a helping hand. Then he must take the spoon and string it UP through his clothes starting at the lowest point of entry so it comes out at the collar of his shirt. The spoon must be strung through the whole line of players in an up-down-down-up sequence until everyone is threaded together.

When the last person has finished, everyone stands shoulder to shoulder as closely together as possible. The string is then cut at the place of entry on the first person in the row. The last person in the row pulls the string out and the shortest string is the winner.

THINKING GAMES—USING YOUR NOODLE

These games require players to take the lampshades off their heads and put on their thinking caps.

Murder

Cut a sheet of paper into as many slips as there are guests. Mark one slip with an "X" and another with a "D." Leave the rest of the slips blank and put them all into a bowl for guests to draw from. The player who draws the "X" is the Murderer and the player to draw the "D" is the Detective. The Murderer keeps his identity secret and all slips are put back into the bowl. The Detective leaves the room and the lights are switched off. The rest of the players move around the room in the dark, and when the Murderer puts his hands on the victim, that player must scream and fall to the floor. Then the lights are switched on and the Detective is called back into the room to start the super sleuthing.

The Detective may ask as many questions as he wants and all players, except the Murderer, must answer truthfully. The Detective gets only one guess and when he thinks he knows who the Murderer is, he says, "I charge you (suspect's name) with the heinous crime of murdering (victim's name)." If the guess is correct, the Murderer must admit his guilt.

Like most adventurous and exciting pastimes, "Murder" is best played in the dark! But, if you are pathetic enough to have a party during daylight hours, there is another murderously fun game to play called "Wink," explained on the next page, that must be played in the light.

Wink

Pull as many cards from a deck of playing cards as there are guests at the party. One of the cards must be the Ace of Spades. Every player picks a card and the one who draws the Ace is deemed the Murderer. He must "kill" his victims by winking at them, but he must be quick and clever about it so no one else sees him do the terrible deed. The rest of the players look all around the room at each other trying to figure out the identity of the Murderer.

The object of the game is for the Murderer to kill off everyone without being discovered. When victims are "killed," they should wait a few seconds before they wail their dying breath so they don't give the Murderer away. The person to catch the Murderer in the act is the winner, but if someone falsely accuses another player, the penalty is instant death.

Smarty Pants

Before the party, prepare 10 or 15 unrelated trivia questions. Good sources include a dictionary, encyclopedia or any of the trivia games out there. Hand all your guests a blank game sheet and as you ask the group the questions, have them write down their answer. Players may break off into pairs or teams for this one. Naturally, players with the most correct answers win a prize.

Tall Tales

Divide the guests into as many groups of four or six people as possible, and hand each group a bag full of five unrelated articles. The object of this thinking game is for the group to fabricate a story relating all five objects together. Each group has a time limit of two minutes to prepare their story so that most of it is really just ad-libbed.

You can appoint a panel of judges to decide which group's story is the best, based on creativity and humor, and that group wins a prize of being allowed to go first to the dessert buffet.

Pad & Pencil Games

These fun games will bring to mind fond memories of high school days when you walked into class without reading an overnight assignment and the teacher handed out paper for a pop quiz.

A Word to the Wise

Before the party, either make copies of the game sheet provided on the opposite page, or make your own custom sheet. In the numbered boxes of the far left vertical column put the letters of a word or phrase that relates to the theme of the party. For example, you could write out "Old Geezer" for a milestone birthday or "Goblins" for a Halloween party. Every guest receives a game sheet and play begins when the Timer, holding a stop watch, says "GO." Players have 30 seconds to fill in the first row with words that begin with the letter in square one. For example, if the word was "G-O-B-L-I-N-S," everyone would have to write down a movie title, vegetable, animal, country, and celebrity that begins with the letter "G" in 30 seconds. The key is for players to think of words as original as possible because any word that is used by more than one player is discounted.

Players get 1 point for all original words and 0 points for words used by other players. The winner is the player with the most points or the person willing to spend the rest of the evening carrying out the calculations.

Letters of Word	Celebrity	Movie Title	Country	Vegetable	Animal	Plant/ Flower
1)						
2)						
3)						
4)						
5)						
6)						
7)						
8)						
9)						
10)						

Gimme Gimme

This is a fun game to play either right at the start of a party when guests barely know each other, or later on when guests get a feel for each other's personalities. Simply hand out pencils and paper to each guest. Everyone writes down 8 things they think the person on their left would love to have. Items on the Wish List can be as crazy or creative as the party allows. After all guests have completed their lists, they hand them to the person on their left to read aloud to the group. At certain kinds of parties (the ones I never get invited to) the guests actually get some of their wishes.

"SO, WHO WANTS TO PLAY
'GIMME GIMME'?"

Raging Bull

This game requires you to do a little homework. Before the party, gather uncommon vocabulary words from a dictionary and, making sure your pronunciation is accurate, read the words and five possible definitions for each one. Players have to pick the correct definition and write their answers on a piece of paper. The player with the most correct guesses wins a small prize. Some examples appear below to get you started.Does this game seem similar to those SAT exams you took years ago? That's because it is, and unless your guests are like my brother-in-law, you probably should move onto a livelier game. Even 50-year-olds like games with sex and rowdiness in them.

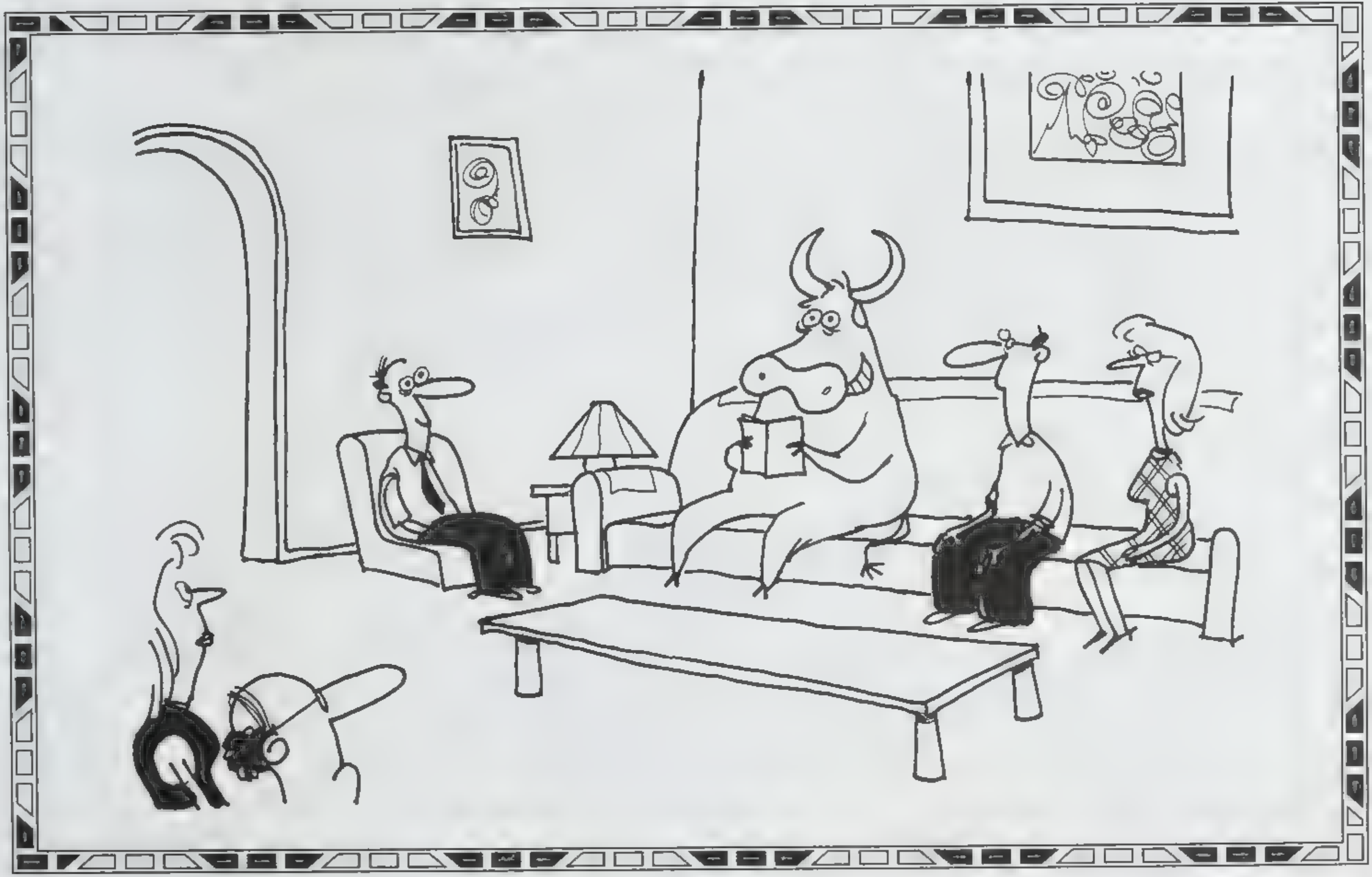
1) Cormorant

A) A horn shaped structure
B) A large, voracious diving bird with webbed toes and a hooked beak
C) A squad commanded by a corporal
D) In the lead, foremost

2) Scammony

A) A rare metallic chemical element
B) A small quantity or amount
C) The act of perpetrating a scam
D) A plant whose roots have medicinal resins

Answers: 1) B 2) D



Signs of The Times

Before the party, think up several popular road or information signs and write them down either on individual slips of paper for each guest or post them on a large board for all to see. Only write the first letter of each word in the sign and leave blank spaces for the missing letters. Guests have to fill in the blanks and figure out the sign within a given time frame (3 to 5 minutes is best.) Below are possible signs to use but feel free to be as creative as you want. Just make sure the signs you use are relatively common so your guests won't be totally clueless.

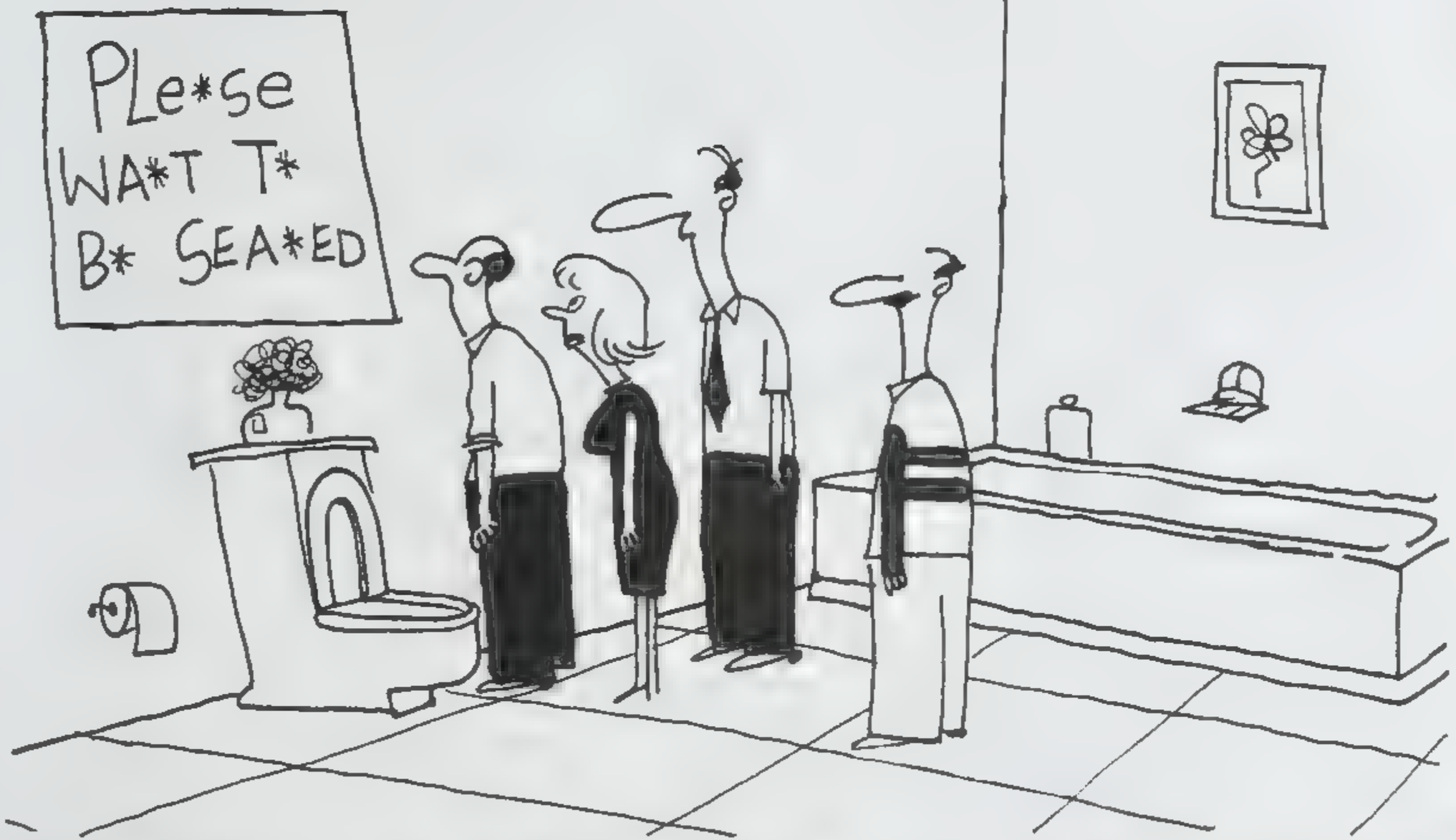
N_ L_ _ _ T_ _ _
L_ _ _ O_ G_ _ _ _ A_ _ _ _
L_ _ _ S_ _ _ _
N_ S_ _ _ _ _ _ _
C_ _ _ _ _ _ _ A_ P_ _ _
N_ P_ _ _ _ _ _ B_ _ _ _ _ _ S_ _ _ _

N_ T_ _ _ O_ R_ _
K_ _ _ R_ _ _ _
S_ _ _ _ V_ _ _
P_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ C_ _ _ _ _ _
W_ _ _ _ W_ _
D_ N_ _ E_ _ _

Answers

No Left Turn
Left on Green Arrow
Lane Shift
No Shoulder
Children At Play
No Parking Between Signs

No Turn On Red
Keep Right
Scenic View
Pedestrians Crossing
Wrong Way
Do Not Enter


PLe*se
WA*T T*
B* SEA*ED

Nonsense

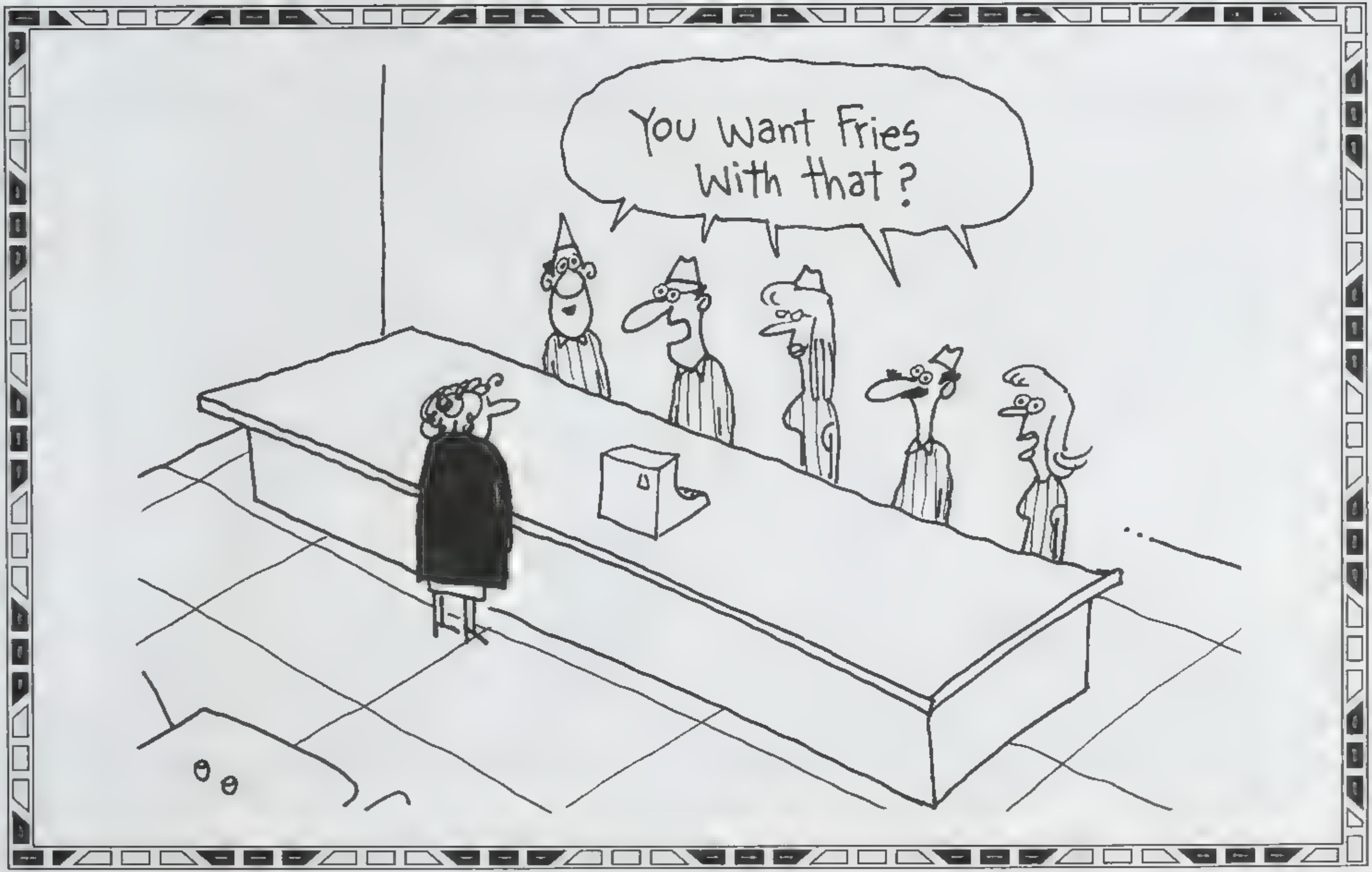
As the name suggests, this game is pretty silly. Before the party, prepare a set number of questions or commands. Read the list to the guests and have them write their reponses on a sheet of paper. For example, you could ask guests to write down:

A number between 1 and 200
Yes, No or Maybe
The best job in the world
The worst job in the world
An amount of money
The names of three notorious celebrities
A number between 2 and 90

After everyone has competed their list, reveal that what they were actually filling out was an application to work at a fast food chain! Read each real question of the "application" in order including:

What's your age?
Are you female?
What was your last job?
What job do you hold now?
What salary do you require?
Who are your references?
How many children do you have?

Players respond by telling the group their nonsensical answers and everyone has a good laugh. This game can also help you get a pretty interesting part time job at McDonald's


You Want Fries With that ?

PAIRING UP & FORMING TEAMS

Although some party games single out individual achievement and crown one player the "winner," most party games are designed around teams to promote a camaraderie among guests. If groups of people are working together toward the same goal, they are more likely to loosen up and enjoy themselves. Lots of fun party games require players to be paired up or divided into small groups. Hosts should avoid letting people pick their own teams because it will prevent guests from getting to know each other and mingling—and that's the whole point of the party isn't it? Here are a few fun and simple ways to get people to group into pairs and teams:

Who Am I?

Instruct all the men to write a description of themselves on a slip of paper to put in a big bowl. They can opt to be blunt and simply describe the clothes they are wearing and the color of their hair, or they can be subtle and describe their disposition or outlook on life. The women pick a slip from the bowl and try to find the man who matches the description. That man becomes their partner for a game.

Floating Partner

Before the party, write the name of each guest on its own tiny slip of paper. Insert the paper into balloons, making sure all the men's names are in one color balloon and all the women's names in another color balloon.

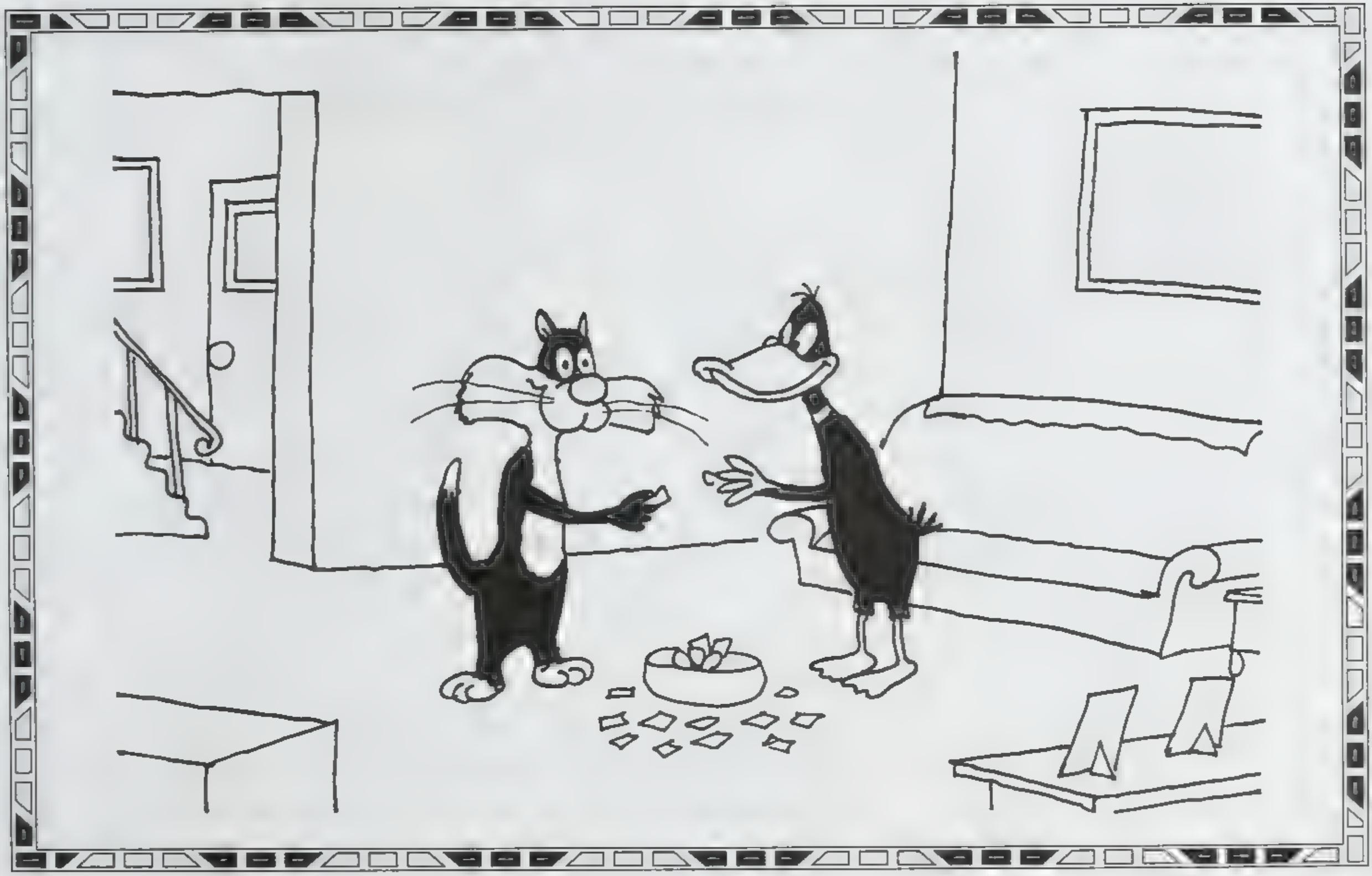
When it's time to play a game, ask all the women to choose a balloon of the color containing a man's name, and pop it. The name of the male guest on the slip inside becomes their partner.

Then, the next game you play, have all the men choose a remaining balloon and pop it. The woman's name on the slip of paper inside becomes their partner.

Scramble

Write the names of famous couples on sheets of paper, then cut the sheets so that each half of the couple is on a different slip. Mix up all the slips in a bowl and then ask each guest to pick one. Players locate their better half by asking everyone else which name they drew.

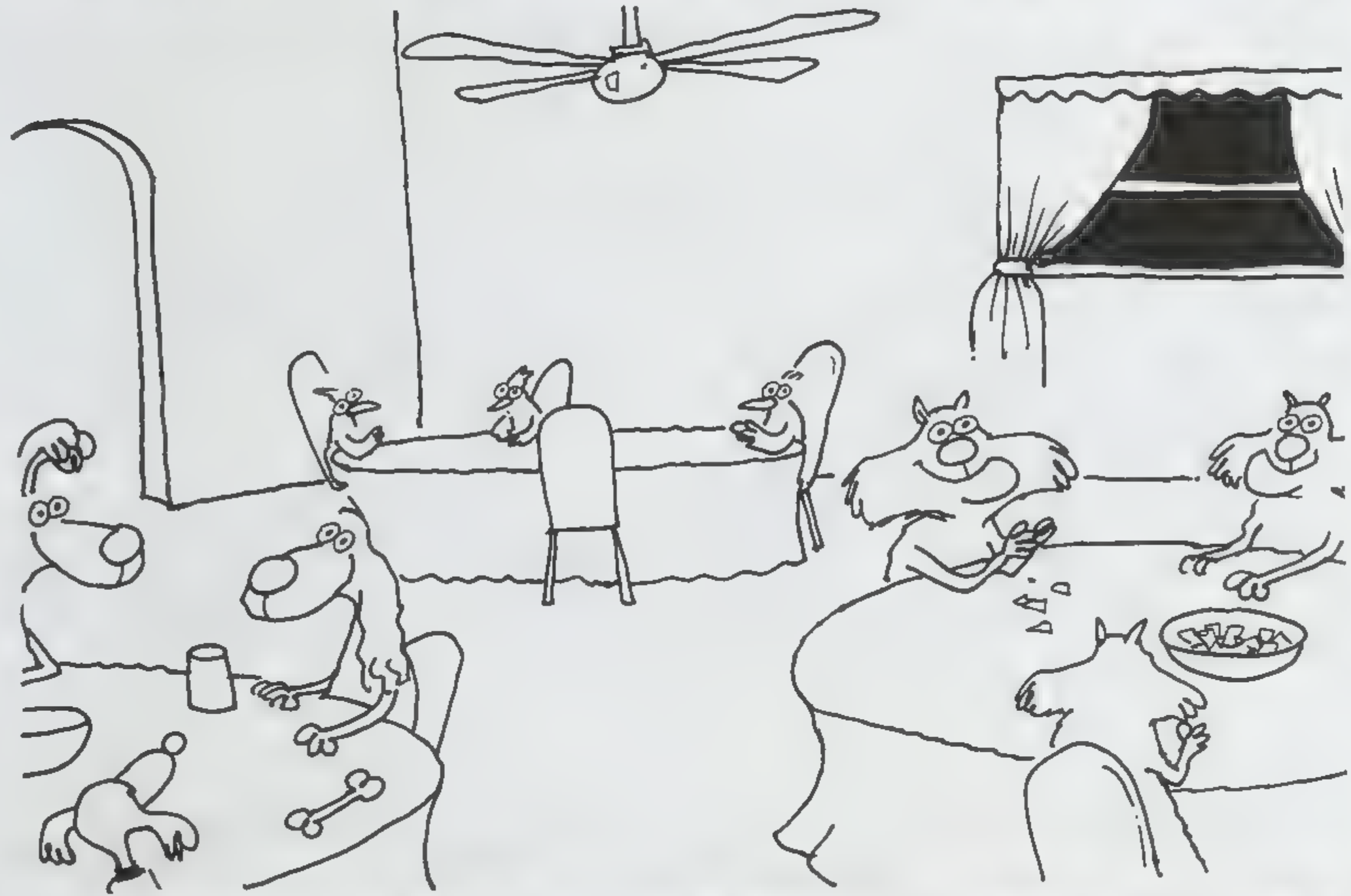
Possible pairs include Robin Hood & Maid Marion, Heathcliff & Kathryn, Hall & Oates, Dr. Jeckyll & Mr. Hyde, Fred & Ginger, Ozzie & Harriet, Laurel & Hardy, Abbott & Costello, Ralph & Alice, Lucy & Ricky, Fred & Ethel, Judy Garland & Mickey Rooney, Lewis & Martin, Burns & Allen, etc.



The Whole Fam Damily

Some games require guests to break off into several teams of 4 or 5 players. A great way to make quick teams is by preparing slips of paper representing entire famous families. As in "Famous Couples," guests pick the slips from a bowl and then match up with the rest of the people in their new-found "family."

Here are some popular family trees to consider: Marge, Homer, Bart, Lisa and Maggie Simpson; Jan, Marcia, Cindy, and Carol Brady; Howard, Marion, Richie and Joanie Cunningham; Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy March; etc.



PRIZES

Although lots of party games require a team effort, some focus on individual winners. Rewarding that person with a silly little prize adds to the light, fun atmosphere of any decent party. Some people call them "booby" prizes and the term refers to inexpensive, humorous prizes that no one would ever think of buying for themselves. (I don't know about you, but to me, coming home from a party with a handful of booby sounds pretty good). Although people wouldn't be caught dead buying this stuff in a store, they'll stomp the life out of each other to win them in a game. You can pick up great gag gifts at any party store, much like the one where you bought this silly book.

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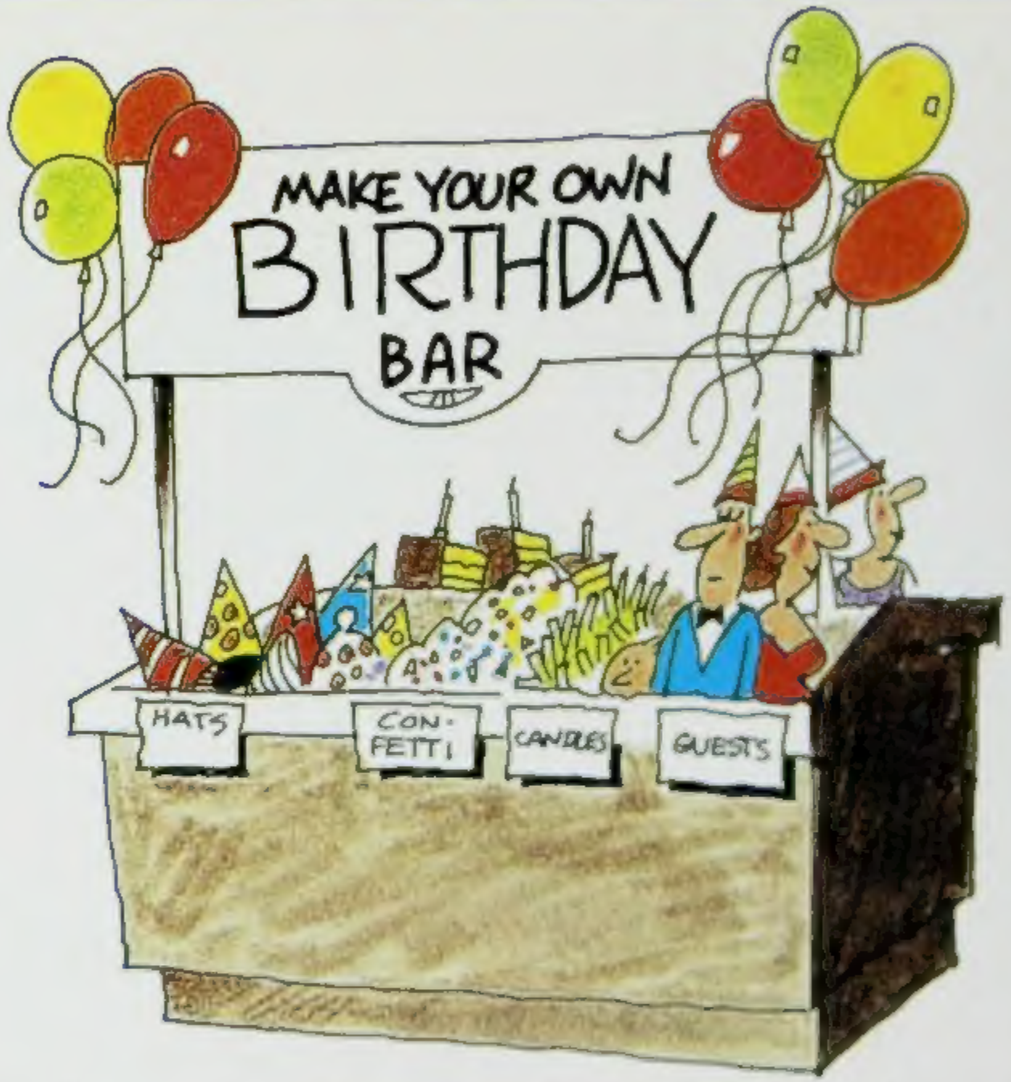

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